to be. Every conscientious commander will therefore consider it a sacred duty, before making an official statement affecting the honor and reputation of a subordinate, to scrutinize with scrupulous care the least incident connected with the case; and when at last, after weighing every circumstance, he has arrived at the conclusion that his duty commands him to pronounce a censure, he will again well weigh every word he says so as to be perfectly sure that he does not say too much. For it must be considered that public opinion is generally swayed by first impressions, and an injury once done can but rarely be.re-pair^d by a subsequent modification of language.

" And I now invite you to apply this criterion^ which cer-tainly is a just one, to the report of General Hooker. That it is severe in its reflections on a body of troops, nobody will deny. By solemnly excepting them in a general commtenda-tion of courage and valor, it stigmatizes them as destitute of the first qualities which a soldier is proud of. That the report is a just one, who will after this investigation assert it? I am far from, saying that General Hooker knowingly and willfully reported what was false; his position ought to exempt him from the suspicion of such an act. I have not entertained that suspicion a moment, but what excuse is there for his error?

" There are two things which every conscientious man will be careful to guard against. The first is saying anything to the

prejudice of another which he knows to be false, and the other is saying anything to the prejudice of another which he does not positively know to be true. And did General Hooker positively know Ms report to be true and just? He could not know to be just what is proved to be unjust. But would it have been impossible to ascertain the truth? I lived within five minutes* walk of his headquarters. My brigade commanders were aU within call. I saw him almost every day, and a single question